

Special Edition

A Publication About Exceptional Students

Winter 2003 - 2004



A Message from Superintendent Tom Horne

The Arizona Department of Education is in the midst of a very busy schedule for releasing testing results. Among those reports is the 2002-2003 school year AIMS test data.

One of the brightest pieces of news to come out of the AIMS testing is the across-the-board improvement in mathematics scores. In fact, the proficiency levels for math went up in all grade levels. This is encouraging news that demonstrates Arizona schools are on the right track in developing strategies for teaching mathematics in an effective manner.

I'm especially pleased with the very significant increase in the 10th grade math scores. Those scores, along with the results from 3rd and 5th graders, were up by three percentage points. This year's sophomores will face serious consequences if they don't pass AIMS next spring. Therefore, the fact that last year's 10th graders improved so significantly despite not facing the same consequences should herald even better scores in the future.

Since taking office in January of this year, I've been proud of how the Arizona Department of Education has risen to the many challenges facing public education not only in our state, but nationwide. Setting and attaining meaningful goals for the Department and for Arizona's school children is very important.

The Department has had an intense focus on having schools employ the best teaching practices, improve the ability to interpret data, and teaching the standards that are tested in AIMS. The Department has held seven regional seminars to help schools implement these methods, and I'm committed to sending solutions teams to schools that most need to improve their scores.

The AIMS Test has special significance because it tests materials the students have been taught. Massachusetts has a high-stakes test similar to AIMS, and their graduation rate is 90 percent. Studies showed that the ten percent who didn't graduate had poor attendance records. Our message to parents is: If you send your children to school and they do their homework, they will learn the standards and pass AIMS. If they don't come to school, we can't teach them.



Tom Horne,
Superintendent of Public Instruction

The mission of the Arizona Department of Education is service, and I'm confident that as we continue in that paradigm, Arizona's public school students will continue to see improving test results.

Featured topic:
Strategies for Teaching Math to Students with Disabilities

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CALL FOR ARTICLES

We invite you to submit an article for a future issue of the **Special Edition**.

Article deadline for the spring 2004 issue is January 15, 2004. Feature topics will be "Due Process" and "Teaching Social Skills to Students with Disabilities."

Article deadline for the fall 2004 issue is May 15, 2004. Feature topics will be "What does 'Highly Qualified Personnel' Mean to Arizona Educators?" and "Latest Research on 'Other Health Impairments.'"

Article deadline for the winter 2004-05 issue is September 15, 2004. Featured topics will be "Inclusion" and "ADD/ADHD."

Editing assistance is available/provided as needed. Please contact Peggy Levesque at plevesq@ade.az.gov for writers guidelines and a list of additional article ideas to consider.

Send photographs to accompany articles to the address below, ATTN: Special Edition

To stay abreast of what's going on at the Arizona Department of Education, check out the web site frequently. www.ade.az.gov

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A Time of Change

By Joanne Phillips, Associate Deputy Superintendent, ESS

"The one constant in life is change." I wish I could remember who said that, because it is truly a rule of life. Perhaps it is because we are such a vibrant, creative species, or maybe because we are never quite satisfied with things just the way they are. Then again it is possible we simply get bored with the status quo and seek something new. Whatever the reason, people continually seek new experiences, new challenges, new frontiers. It is how we continue to grow and stay alive!

My job as the state director of special education is certainly a new experience for me. Throughout my career, I have had opportunities to view special education from local, state, and national perspectives. The state level, however, has brought me much more in tune with national policy and practices on a constant basis, which of course, changes monthly! Change...

Updates and information arrive almost daily from the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), United States Department of Education (USDOE), Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRC), special education law reports, universities, and other state directors. How to keep ahead of it? With the same strategy we use in the schools: surround ourselves with a team of hard-working, knowledgeable professionals who are committed to providing the highest level of service possible; professionals who seek out information, learn it and then train others; professionals who care about children with disabilities regardless of their age or location. I am proud to have one of the best teams of my career at Exceptional Student Services.

During the past few months, some of our team members spread their wings and returned to the schools, wiser, richer in knowledge, eager to apply what they learned at the state level. New team members have joined us, wanting to take their skills to the next step. Many returned to start a new year, to fulfill commitments, make new ones, solve problems and lend support and assistance. Change....

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has caused us to rethink our practices and strategies. We must be more diligent in pre-referral interventions to sort those with learning problems from those with true disabilities. We must find better strategies to allow students with mild disabilities to

access the curriculum in the grade in which they are enrolled. They must learn the curriculum content and become as proficient as possible. We must be accountable for progress. Change...

That said, we must also recognize that not all children can, nor will, be proficient in core academics, any more than all children can be skilled athletes. IDEA Reauthorization may or may not address the conflict between NCLB and the current IDEA concepts of unique, individual, educational programs. However, we can and will maintain high expectations for ALL children, we will expect progress for ALL children, and we will acknowledge the unique strengths and weaknesses all possess. There will be change in legal direction, legal priority, and legal definition. However, in the face of change, the commitment of parents, teachers, related service and support staff to make a positive impact on children with disabilities stands firm, perhaps even stronger. This commitment is borne out from the very top, with the unflagging support of State Superintendent Tom Horne and Associate Superintendent Lillie Sly, from the Exceptional Student Services Division, and from all our schools, whether they are traditional, charter, secure care, private agencies, or state institutions. In a joint effort with parents, we will bring about the most magnificent change of all: The success of all children with disabilities.



Survivors of Coyote Island

Who says education can't be fun?

Research identifies tying academic subjects to real life as a viable way to interest, even excite, students about learning, but coming up with ideas poses a real challenge for teachers. Last year the Coyote teacher-team, consisting of David Dowdle, Pam Floyd, Ken Hunter and Rob Pedersen, at Desert Sands Middle School (DSMS) in the Cartwright School District accepted that challenge. They developed an interdisciplinary unit that integrates AIMS- and national standards-based academic learning with a theme to help students achieve success in school.

"Since middle school students don't yet understand what adult life is all about," said David Dowdle, one of Coyote Team's teachers, "connecting them to something they see on television or other media can help form a strong link." The "Survivor" television series captured the attention of many students and staff with its debut several years ago. This show provided the team with a forum from which to look at what students need to know to survive in the world.

The team simulates for the students the environment of a deserted tropical island with very few outside resources. The goal is not only to survive on the island, but also to study it and develop comfortable living conditions. The students are divided into four tribes that settle different "safe" areas. These tribal divisions increase in importance as they become more familiar with their island.

Together, all four teachers on the team developed theme-related learning activities and strategies that meet each teacher's individual academic standards requirements. The team loops up from the seventh to the eighth grade, so the unit design includes a range of activities to present over a two-year block of time. Lessons are student driven, rather than

teacher taught, and utilize a variety of teaching strategies to fully engage all types of learners.



Several subjects form the foundation for beginning the adventure. Science and math introduce measurement and the metric system. Social studies starts with mapping skills and types of maps. Language Arts begins with writing exercises, journaling and literature studies using various resources about survival.

From there, the students move on to learning about rocks and minerals, which leads into plate tectonics and the dynamics that "formed" Coyote Island. They examine the shape and size of the land mass and measure it in a variety of ways including area, altitude, topography, and geological features. With that information, they develop a scale, and map the area and these features of the island. Students also study the area and people-cultures of surrounding islands. Eventually they establish a communication system between the tribes, as well as the outside world.

Language Arts covers such things as newsletter and newspaper publishing. Students learn to write letters, research papers and a variety of reports including persuasive, narrative, and expository. Public speaking is addressed by presentations and debates. Reading includes all genres, with an emphasis on various aspects of survival, using books such as *The Cay*, and *Hatchett*.

Social Studies not only looks at maps and cultures, but also the history of their island, types of governments, the writing of laws and constitutions, and economics. Students use shadowing (similarity) to identify appropriate tree size for building shelters. A number of opportunities to use basic math skills arise. One

Continued on page 22

Rural College Looking Out for Pinal County



By Tina Swearingen, ADE/ESS/PINS

As a rural community, Pinal County has many issues when it comes to the health and wellness of its citizens. Central Arizona College (CAC), Pinal County's only community college, believes their role within the county should extend to address how a population-based performance-monitoring program can reduce disparities in health status in the college's internal and external communities.

Using *Healthy People 2010* as a model, CAC is proposing to create and implement a Community Health and Wellness Center, utilizing CAC's facilities, staff, students, and community partners. An advisory committee has been developed with representatives from the medical community, educational representatives, disability representatives, as well as CAC staff, students and local businesses.

The advisory committee will lay the groundwork for the new project and proposed center. Factors to be addressed are: reduction of obesity and related diseases, increasing physical activity, motivating families to get involved in developing their own individual wellness programs, providing limited psychological and/or motivational support, inclusion of programming for those with disabilities, along with parent and/or patient education. Overall, the project hopes to improve the health and wellness of both CAC's internal community and Pinal County at large.

For further information you may contact, Julianne Gregory, MS, RD, Central Arizona College at Julianne_Gregory@centralaz.edu, or Tina Swearingen, Advisory Member at kswear99@cybertrails.com.

New Resource

AskABLE

A free on-line personal disability resource, AskABLE has been established at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. It is a question and answer service that allows users to ask questions regarding accommodations, assistive technology, the ADA, employment, and specific disability concerns. Their advertised response time is "within two business days." Users are given the opportunity to review previously asked questions. Answers are provided by "teachers, doctoral students and specialized professionals with decades of experience in working with individuals with disabilities."

<http://askable.askvrd.org>



From April through September of 2003, 4342 people logged on to the Enhancing Arizona's Parent Network's (EAPN) web site. If you weren't one of them, do it now to take advantage of the wealth of information available to parents of children with disabilities. Print, copy and distribute the Training and Event Calendar and make your community aware of the wide variety of activities and events occurring in your area. The Information and Leadership articles are updated regularly. "Bookmarks" are a great promotional tool for getting the word out to families about this invaluable resource. If you would like copies in English or Spanish, contact Becky Raabe at beckyraabe@aol.com or 928.526.2566.

Seven “M’s” of Mathematics

Myths • Memory • Models • Metaphor • Meta Learning • Multimedia • Miracles

Myths:

1. **Successfully using math requires special math aptitude.**

In the last century, it was thought reading required reading aptitude; there were readers and non-readers. Today we know everyone can learn to read. Similarly everyone can successfully learn to use math on a much higher level than we are now achieving; no special aptitude is required.

2. **People who are good at math know the answer and solve problems in one step.**

This is rarely true. Usually problems must be broken into a series of smaller problems to arrive at an answer.

3. **To be skilled using math means never making mistakes.**

This is also false. Everyone makes mistakes. This is why the eraser is on the pencil. Further mistakes often illuminate the process. Learning to recognize a mistake when the answer doesn't make sense is the art.

4. **People who are good at math aren't expressive, creative or interesting.**

They are usually nerds. Not true. Some of us are right brained. Math and music talent seem to correlate. Some of the best problem solving is done using intuition. See myth #1.

Memory:

Memory is developed by building pathways in the brain. Imagine walking across a field of grass in the spring. The first few times the grass pops back to hide your footprints, but if you continue to walk across the same area, eventually a path is made. [Research

shows] every time a brain cell is used there is a bit of energy that is fed back to the cell, making it stronger. [...] Learning can take place at all ages. Memory can be improved however if there is a storage strategy and/or many associations with the information. Good organization and retrieval strategies improve memory and learning.

Models:

Using familiar models such as the clock and money enhance math learning. Many third graders who protest they can't multiply will, when presented with six quarters, tell you it's worth \$1.50. Similarly most know if the minute hand is pointing at the 9 on the clock, 45 minutes have past since the hour began. Visualization increases retention and reduces time needed to teach a concept. The clock model provides a strategy to reconstruct the 5's until long term memory that $9 \times 5 = 45$ is developed.

Metaphor:

Learning math is a metaphor for life. Many times when faced with new math topics, students feel lost, frustrated and want to quit. They can only succeed if



they risk stepping into unknown territory, and persist with the struggle to learn. This process needed to incorporate new concepts into their math foundation is a wonderful metaphor for life.

Meta Learning:

Meta learning is learning how to learn. Students have different learning styles: some learn predominantly by reading, some by watching, some by listening and others by hands on, experimenting with various approaches.

The process of solving problems in math often involves using many resources, breaking the problem into a series of smaller, less complex steps or solving a similar but easier problem to see the process. This method of problem solving can be viewed as one way of 'learning how to learn' and can be applied across the curriculum.

Multimedia:

Multimedia is an effective tool to enhance learning because with visualization, sound, and interactivity, all learning modalities are used.

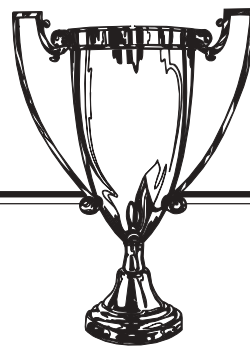
Learning is emotional. Color, music, and animation enhance the experience. Interactivity allows students to follow different paths, explore and discover. Interactive students become active learners. Immediate feedback helps students develop strategies and confidence. Using multimedia reduces the time needed to learn a concept and increases retention.

Miracles:

There are no miracles needed to learn math and no magic required to solve math problems. Developing math sense involves the step-by-step building of a solid math foundation with both information and relationships.

For more information, go to www.mathmatters.net

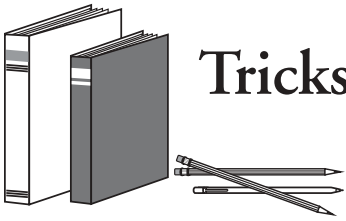
For more Promising Practice Research and Tips, check out <http://www.azpromisingpractices.com/archive.html>



Arizona Awarded Teacher Quality Enhancement State Grant

The awarding of \$8.1 million in federal competitive grant dollars to the Arizona Department of Education, Governor's office, the state's three public universities, several Indian tribes and the Coconino County schools Superintendent comes as good news for the state's efforts to train more high quality teachers. Money from the Teacher Quality Enhancement State Grant Program will be used for teacher recruitment, retention, and training, specifically in Native American communities. It will be paid over three years. Under the plan, the partnering entities will develop a local approach to recruiting Native Americans as teachers with the aim of increasing the pool of prospective educators in the future. There will also be statewide programs for mentoring new teachers, coordinating and providing teacher development opportunities, and a data management system that will analyze teacher quality and performance as well as potential shortages.

For more information contact Tacy Ashby at 602.364.2339.



Tricks of the Trade for Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities



- Always ask questions in a clarifying manner, then have the students with learning disabilities describe his or her understanding of the questions.
- Use an overhead projector with an outline of the lesson or unit of the day.
- Reduce course load for students with learning disabilities.
- Provide clear photocopies of your notes and overhead transparencies, if the student benefits from such strategies.
- Provide students with chapter outlines or study guides that cue them to key points in their readings.
- Provide a detailed course syllabus before class begins. Ask questions in a way that helps the student gain confidence.
- Keep oral instructions logical and concise. Reinforce them with brief cue words. Repeat or re-word complicated directions.
- Frequently verbalize what is being written on the chalkboard.
- Eliminate classroom distractions such as excessive noise, flickering lights, etc.
- Outline class presentations on the chalkboard or on an overhead transparency. Outline material to be covered during each class period unit. (At the end of class, summarize the important segments of each presentation.)
- Establish the clarity of understanding that the student has about class assignments.
- Give assignments both in written and oral form.
- Have more complex lessons recorded and available to students with learning disabilities.
- Have practice exercises available for lessons, in case the student has problems.
- Have students with learning disabilities underline key words or directions on activity sheets (then review the sheets with them).
- Have complex homework assignments due in two or three days rather than the next day.
- Pace instruction carefully to ensure clarity.
- Present new and/or technical vocabulary on the chalkboard or overhead.
- Provide and teach memory associations (mnemonic strategies).
- Support one modality of presentation by following it with instruction and then use another modality.
- Talk distinctly and at a rate that the student with a learning disability can follow.
- Technical content should be presented in small incremental steps.
- Use plenty of examples, oral or otherwise, in order to make topics more applicable.
- Use straightforward instructions with step-by-step unambiguous terms. (Preferably, presented one at a time.)
- Write legibly, use large type; do not clutter the blackboard with non-current/non-relevant information.
- Use props to make narrative situations more vivid and clear.
- Assist the student, if necessary, in borrowing classmates' notes.
- Consider cross-age or peer tutoring if the student appears unable to keep up with the class pace or with complex subject matter. The more capable reader can help in summarizing the essential points of the reading or in establishing the main idea of the reading.

This document is entitled “Teacher Presentation for Students with Disabilities” on the web site STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES.

<http://www.as.wvu.edu/~scidis/learning.html>

Math Scores Rise Higher for Fountain Hills Sophomores

Anne Ryman, *The Arizona Republic*
September 3, 2003

FOUNTAIN HILLS - More sophomores in Fountain Hills passed math on the latest round of the AIMS test than in previous years, thanks to an increased emphasis on math and more communication among teachers.

Fifty-six percent of sophomores in the Fountain Hills Unified School District passed math, compared with 36 percent the year before. Seventy-eight percent of sophomores passed reading, while 71 [percent] passed writing.

Vickie Walters, the district's director of instructional support, said Fountain Hills teachers are making sure the curriculum covered in math classes coincides with the skills measured by AIMS.

"We're lucky we have a small district, and we're able to meet together as math teachers," she said.

Fountain Hills' math results for sophomores passing AIMS were in the top 5 among valley school districts. Gilbert Unified had the highest percentage of sophomores passing AIMS, at 69 percent.

Walters said that although district officials are pleased with the results, they want to make sure more sophomores pass AIMS in the future. Fountain Hills High School has math courses for students who didn't pass the test on the first round, she said.

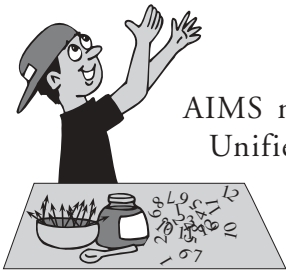
The [Arizona] State Department of Education released results Tuesday [September 2] of the 2003 Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards, known as the AIMS test. The exam tests students against state benchmarks for reading, writing and math.

This year's sophomores will be the state's first students who must pass the high-stakes test before they can graduate. *[The Department qualifies this statement with "if following a regular graduation track".]*

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Making Time



AIMS math scores at Fountain Hills Unified School District (FHUSD) increased significantly this year.

They accomplished this by establishing math as a district focus. For them, this meant carving out time for vertical articulation.

Using portions of staff development and grade-level planning time already set aside, FHUSD brought their personnel together from across the district. They began by allocating blocks of time for each grade level to map out appropriate curriculum to address state standards. Then K-12 math teachers met to confirm that all standards were covered. They also shared what each grade

level was doing to assist related student learning. Vertical articulation allowed the math teachers to ensure that all areas of the math standards were covered.

FHUSD is discovering the truth of the Arizona Department of Education's (ADE) assertion that if the districts teach the state standards for math, students should be able to pass the AIMS math test. Their only qualifier is that the whole district must have the same focus. Teachers must be given the necessary time to meet with colleagues to review and ensure all math standards are covered. For them, the results well justified the two-day investment of already established planning time spread out over the school year for each math teacher, which did not impact the budget. The district is working toward another increase in math scores this year.

Submitted by Vickie Walters, Director of Instructional Support, Fountain Hills Unified School District. Please direct questions to vwalters@fhUSD.org.

Susan's Tips for Parents:

- TAKE A DEEP BREATH!
- Document factual information, omitting emotions (difficult, but imperative).
- Make a list of the things you want to see changed, and potential solutions to the problem.
- Approach the people who are closest to the situation first. Imagine the process as a ladder; start climbing the rungs from the bottom up until you get positive results.
- Constantly maintain the focus on your child, not losing sight that your child's education is of utmost importance.
- Take care of yourself. Surround yourself with support so the challenge does not overwhelm you.

A Story of School/Parent Partnership and Success

Susan Modos knew that maintaining a routine was especially important for a child with disabilities. She had developed confidence in the program at a Mesa public school that met her son's needs from the first through the third grades, and expected it to continue. Therefore, she met the discovery that the program was not offered for the upper elementary grades with a certain amount of trepidation.

"I worried about how my son would respond to another placement so soon," Susan said. Many changes would be required from teachers, classroom instructional assistance, bus drivers, even the time of pick-up in the morning. Perhaps most importantly, she wondered if they could find a comparable program in a nearby school.

Fortunately Mesa School District offered a variety of resources. To help Susan wade through the process of researching a new school, she was introduced to a "demonstration teacher," who specialized in programs for students with mild mental disabilities (MIMD) and autism. This former special education teacher understood the many facets of disabilities in the classroom and identified the schools that offered the programs Susan's son needed in order to thrive. The demonstration teacher accompanied Susan to all of the school interviews, and offered insight into the various options. By the end of the school year, Susan felt comfortable with her choice.



Unfortunately, after the first two weeks of fourth grade, Susan saw clearly that this classroom did not meet her son's needs after all. "I was concerned that if I didn't take action, my son might experience long-term damage to his self esteem." She called the demonstration teacher for advice. Within hours, the demonstration teacher called back providing a recommendation for a school that had the same placement, with the bonus of being closer to home. Once Susan made the decision to move forward with the change, the demonstration teacher personally gathered Susan's son's belongings and arranged for the transfer.

"The Mesa School District made every effort to support my search for just the right school

environment for my son,” Susan said. But more than that, the district interviewed her to identify what went wrong in the first placement in order to put into place measures designed to prevent a recurrence. “Transition is difficult for any child, but especially for a child with disabilities,” Susan added. “I feel blessed to have pivotal people around me who provided swift and professional help in rectifying a stressful situation.”

Susan Modos, the East Maricopa Parent Information Network Specialist, provides information to parents of children with special needs. The Parent Information Network (PIN) provides free services to educators and agencies. The PIN has abundant information in their clearinghouse of printed materials, as well as free trainings and workshops. The PIN provides phone consultation to help empower parents to advocate in a positive manner on behalf of their child.

Susan is the mother of a child with mental challenges as well as mild autism. She understands the IEP process as well as the “ins and outs” of special education. She is passionate about helping people become empowered through the process of acquired knowledge. For more information about the services the PIN has to offer, contact Susan at 480.654.1559 or susanmodospins@cox.net.



Want your own copy of the *Special Edition?*

Send your mailing address to Cande Barfuss at mbarfus@ade.az.gov or call her at 602.364.3184.

Special Education Advisory Panel



The State of Arizona has established and maintains an advisory panel for the purpose of providing policy guidance with respect to special education-related services for children with disabilities. The public is encouraged to review the panel's agenda postings and provide input at meetings.

Meeting dates for the remainder of the school year have been determined as follows.

January 20, 2004
March 16, 2004
May 18, 2004

All meetings will be held from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm in Room 417 at the Arizona Department of Education building at 1535 W. Jefferson, Phoenix, AZ.

For additional information, meeting agendas and minutes, visit the web site at <http://www.ade.az.gov>. Click on Educational Programs and Services, then Special Education, then Special Education Advisory Panel. Or, contact Jeannette Zemeida, Administrative Assistant, ADE/ESS at 602.542.3855.

Simple Daily Recipe to *RAISE* Confident Kids

By Marjorie D. Williams, M.Ed.

All families have daily tasks that fill their hectic schedules. One important daily task includes providing children positive attention to enhance their development and confidence. Even on difficult days, a simple daily recipe to empower parents will help *RAISE* confident kids.

Read: Reading builds confidence. Most young children enjoy reading the same book daily. That's good – read three books daily, including two favorite books. Children can read a familiar book to parents while parents can read one new book. Very young readers can pre-read by storytelling: looking at the pictures or reciting by memory. This is a great way to introduce reading. Praise children for their accomplishments and children will learn reading techniques by observing parents.

Advocate: Advocate for children's abilities and learning styles. In educational situations, parents and teachers can collaborate and accentuate children's positive skills and attributes. Acknowledging the good things a child can accomplish will help eliminate challenges children exhibit. Studies show that parent and teacher expectations have a direct influence on a child's motivation to succeed.

Interact: Include uninterrupted talking time with children. One bedtime strategy includes lying in bed nightly to talk about the day in the dark. An interactive communication routine can continue well into high school. This is a relaxed, non-threatening approach to talking. No matter how hectic the day becomes,

maintaining the routine is important to children. Another strategy is to schedule dates. One night, my son and I had a department store date at the children's play table where he served me make-believe coffee drinks for an hour!

Stimulate: Parents who play daily with their children, without background interference, create stimulating opportunities. Stimulation is best achieved through activities combined with asking open-ended questions (questions requiring an answer other than yes or no). Outdoor walks or bike rides, preparing meals and setting the table, doing daily routines together like face washing before bed and brushing teeth ... the simplest things provide a positive parent and child exchange.

Encourage: Children are encouraged when parents believe in them and encourage their dreams. Sometimes the greatest ideas never began as life-changing events. After all, Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone when developing a device to communicate with his deaf wife, and someone's child made a fortune on pet rocks!

RAISE* confident Kids:** Read - Advocate - Interact - Stimulate - Encourage ... mix together and just add ***Love.

Marjorie Williams consults on early intervention with AzEIP and is the parent of a child with special needs.



Five hundred individuals and families "kicked their service up a notch" to children with special needs by attending the Directors Institute October 14-17. Keynote highlights included two lawyers, Melinda Baird and Margaret Bannon Miller, who addressed No Child Left Behind, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Highly Qualified Personnel, and

504 Issues. Kay Psencik spoke on teaching with care, competence and courage.

The Conference offered 69 educational sessions. There were strands for charter schools, secretaries, human resource directors, positive behavior support and reading. The conference also spotlighted, for the first time, vendors with products that primarily reduce paper work for school personnel. They were very well received and will be featured at future Directors Institutes.

The evaluations came back with rave reviews, and everyone who attended reported that they plan to put into action many of the ideas, information and materials that they received at the conference. A HUGE thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of the conference.

Next year's conference will be held the week of October 18-23, 2004.

First Time Awards Presented at the Directors Institute

Exceptional Student Services and Superintendent Tom Horne presented the following awards.

Leadership Award

This award celebrates individuals or schools that have improved curriculum, professional development, program design or other areas of leadership that contribute to more effective student learning.

Atlantis Russ, Special Education Director at Kestrel High School in Prescott, received this year's award. Her leadership has earned her school recognition as one of the very best in complying with special education laws governing the education of students with disabilities.

Atlantis has taken advantage of all the resources offered by the Arizona Department of Education such as the SUPPORT Cadre and trainings offered by the Department. She has worked closely with Prescott's ESS specialist to provide the necessary knowledge and skills to the special education staff that work in the school. She is one of those rare individuals who stepped up to the plate to empower school personnel to provide excellent education for students with disabilities.

Impact in Classrooms and Learning Award

This award celebrates individuals or schools who have improved student achievement and skill acquisition.

Amy Nies is a superior first grade teacher at Manzanita Elementary School in Tucson. She exhibits the highest levels of responsibility, integrity, and accountability that can be found in a professional. Her boundless energy toward her students has resulted in improved learning for every one of them. Amy welcomes children with disabilities into her classroom. By working as part of a team, she includes a variety of children with disabilities and maintains a vision for each one. There is no better formula for success than experience, vision and dedication. Amy's influence reaches both students and colleagues because of her commitment to making learning an exceptional opportunity for all students.

Community Award

This award celebrates individuals or schools who have furthered the field of special education in the area of research, publishing, higher education instruction, vocational, training program design etc.

Julie Beyer is an outstanding educator who has created a model program for preschool students at Kingman Unified School District. Her leadership in obtaining licensing and accreditation of the early childhood program serves as a model for other programs and teachers across the United States. She has recruited excellent teachers for the program and coordinates and implements grants. One of her new projects is the design and installation of a large playground specifically for preschool students.

Her effective collaboration and coordination with all community-based programs to bring in resources for her students exemplifies the highest standard of integrating related services and providers to serve children.



Arizona's Charter for Charters

Goal Two of the Arizona State Improvement Grant (SIG) is centered on improving special education in charter settings. The three main objectives of this goal are to increase the numbers of fully certified special education teachers in charter settings, improve charter compliance, and raise the numbers of charters with quality programs.

To increase the numbers of fully certified special education teachers in charter settings, the SIG created an exciting scholarship program specifically for teachers from charter schools. The program offers to eligible teachers half of their tuition paid for any post baccalaureate work necessary to gain full special education certification. These teachers must commit to staying in an Arizona charter setting for at least two years after receiving their certification, thereby enabling charters to hold on to quality staff. The scholarship will pay for classes through NAU's SELECT program or any of the community colleges in Arizona that offer teacher preparation programs.

Though it is difficult to say how many of Arizona's fully certified special education teachers actually teach in charter settings, it is clear that efforts made under the SIG to reduce the number of emergency certifications is working.

Number of Emergency Certificates Issued	Number of Emergency Certificates Issued 2002-2003	Number of Emergency Certificates Issued 2003-2004 (to date)	Percent Decrease from 2002-2003
Overall	968	712	26
Charter Schools	228	64	72

The SIG works with partners all over the state to help increase compliance. Consortia currently operate in St. David, Pinal and Yavapai Counties. Between the three consortia, over 25 workshops were held on special education compliance issues such as developing IEPs, Child Find, and student led transition meetings.

The SIG also works closely with the SUPPORT Cadre. The Cadre has been a great vessel for distributing special education information to the charters. Cadre members conducted 20 visits to 11 existing charter schools between January and August 2003. An exciting new partnership has Cadre members assigned as special

education mentors to 11 newly chartered schools. Cadre members will spend 20 hours at each school to conduct trainings, as well as help set up special education programs and create policies and procedures.

In an attempt to increase the number of charters with quality programs, the SIG partnered with the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and revised the charter school application. On previous charter applications, the only mention of special education was a single budget line item for special education expenditures. This had no impact on the scoring of the application. In fact, the charter could still be granted with that line item left blank. SIG personnel worked closely with the Charter Board to revise the application and create more accountability in the special education area. The special education section is now a major portion of the application, and no charter will be issued to a school that does not understand the legal and ethical implications of special education in charter settings. The Goal Two Coordinator trained over 75 prospective charter applicants on the new requirements, and the new grading standards.

Finally, Goal Two of the SIG has joined forces with Raising Special Kids and Pilot Parents of Southern Arizona to provide parent information and training throughout the state. Parents have received training on subjects ranging from positive communication between parents and teachers, building collaborative partnerships, and characteristics of children with special needs.

Goal Two of the SIG looks forward to launching its own web site, which will host a message board, chat room and links to relevant sites. The SIG has also created a new partnership in Northern Arizona to reach the many charters in Coconino, Navajo, Apache, and Mojave Counties.

With these exciting partnerships, Goal Two of the SIG will continue to improve the delivery of special education services within charter settings throughout Arizona. For more information, please contact Aanya Rispoli, Goal Two Coordinator for the SIG. She can be reached at 602.364.3026 or email arispol@ade.az.gov.

A Special Thanks to Article Contributors for this Issue

Wendy Collison – ADE/ESS

Amy de Haan - NAU

David Dowdle – DSMS

David Dickman – AZ Distance Learning

Sheree Dove – Rio Salado College

Inge Durre – AIRC/FBC

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Celia Kujawski - NAU

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Aanya Rispoli – ADE/ESS/SIG

Kathleen Rutowski – ASU/COE

Elizabeth Shaw – PPEP TEC CHS

Barbara Shock - Team Words

Peggy Staples – ADE/ESS

Tina Swearingen - ADE/ESS/PINS

June Torrance - On contract to ESS

Vickie Walters – FHUSD

Marjorie Williams - Consultant with AzEIP

Get on the Board!

Gloria Proo of Pima Vocational High School recently used the Arizona Educational Employment Board (AEEB). She said, “I wanted to thank you for this opportunity to post a job opening. I obtained a very good candidate for the science/math teaching position through your service! I was not having success in other avenues. Thanks.”

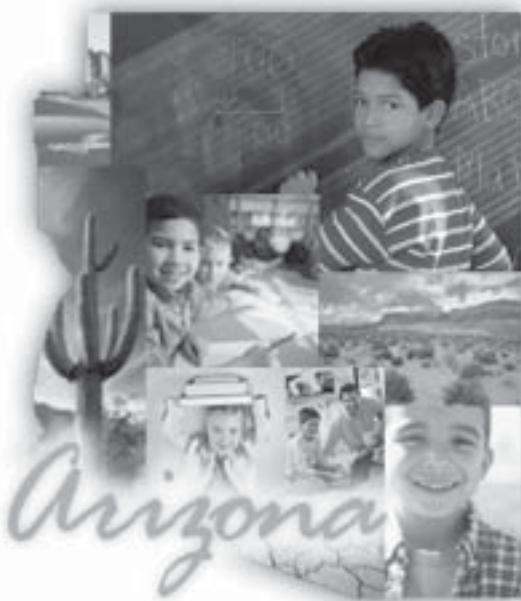
AEEB is an information system developed to assist schools in hiring personnel and to assist individuals who are seeking employment.

The AEEB contains job postings for each of Arizona’s numerous school districts, charter schools, private schools, secure care facilities, and

other education agencies. The jobs that are posted range from principal to secretary and from 12th grade science teacher to preschool special education teacher.

Each posting has a detailed description of the job and contact information the searcher can use to learn more about the position. If the school has a web site, there will be a link next to the posting that the user may click on to find information about the school. If the contact person has an email address, the user may choose to email that contact person with a resume.

<http://www.arizonaeducationjobs.com>



Professional Development Leadership Academy

PDLA

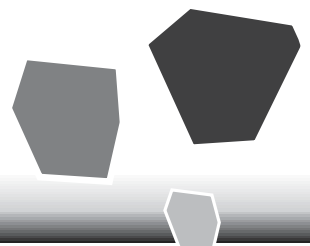
SUPPORT Cadre



What can you expect from a SUPPORT Cadre visit? Generally, the cadre consultant performs observations and conducts interviews of team members while on site. At the end of the day, an informal exit meeting is held to generate an action plan and “laundry list” of strategies, materials and methods to consider. Making accommodations and modifications to meet the needs of special education students in the regular classroom is a common request for consultation. Here are some of the recommendations made in recent consultation summaries provided to individuals and schools:

- ❖ Develop a plan for grouping students to provide educational services in a content area.
- ❖ Use community resources such as college students, retired teachers and student teachers to provide tutorial help.
- ❖ Use community groups/counselor to facilitate a parenting skills group for parents.
- ❖ Ask the special education teacher to provide a summary of needs for each student and possible implications for instruction to content area teachers.
- ❖ Involve regular education teachers in the writing of the IEP and IEP accommodations page to ensure that they are aware that accommodations are to be made in their environment once the student returns to class.
- ❖ Provide the regular education teachers with a tracking instrument that campus administration may wish to check periodically for compliance .
- ❖ Take the regular teacher’s teaching style into consideration; this shows respect for what the classroom teacher is doing and diminishes unnecessary accommodations.
- ❖ Explore other delivery models of service other than the traditional resource model i.e. more inclusive services with special education teachers working in a lab or as buddy teachers in the regular classroom.
- ❖ Use the 21” Zoom Text screen magnification software with and existing computer CPU for low vision student.
- ❖ Include materials and lesson designs that motivate and engage students such as:
 - Science/geography themes
 - Scholastic magazines for science, social development, plays, teen issues
 - 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens by Sean Covey
 - Develop a classroom theme
 - Develop pre-vocational job skills in the classroom, on campus and in the community.

For more information about becoming a SUPPORT Cadre consultant, or an application for services, contact June Torrance at jtorran@ade.az.gov or 480.570.9046.



Accessing Information Technology in the Schools

In 2003, the advent of the information technology and disability rights revolution is rewriting the landscape of education. The introduction of the personal computer, the Internet, and broadband access has given public education a means to reach students with more flexibility and diversity than ever before. Different types of instruction include on-site instruction, Internet-based communication, web pages, video presentations both video-taped and Internet-based, printed materials, satellite communications and telephone conferences. While such services provide students with and without disabilities with new opportunities for learning, students with disabilities face unique challenges to accessing the curriculum.

The Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) is a federally funded program administered by the Institute of Human Development of Northern Arizona University. AzTAP's primary mission is to increase awareness of the need for assistive technology and accessible information technology for persons with disabilities. The past year AzTAP received a sub-contract from the Pacific Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center to work with educational institutions to facilitate their capacity to provide accessible electronic and information technology services for students, employees and the general public. As part of the sub-contract, AzTAP provides training for primary, secondary and post-secondary educational institutions to develop accessible information technology policies.

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits educational institutions from discriminating against persons with disabilities. While neither law specifically deals with web-based curriculum or information technology, the United States Department of Justice has written an opinion letter indicating an educational institution's responsibility to provide "effective communication."

"Covered entities under the ADA are required to provide effective communication, regardless of whether they generally communicate through print media, audio media, or computerized media such as the Internet. Covered entities that use the Internet for communications regarding their programs, goods, or services must be prepared to offer those communications through accessible means as well" (DOJ opinion letter dated 9/9/1996).

Three factors to determine effective communication are: timeliness of delivery; accuracy of the translation; and provision in a manner and medium appropriate to the significance of the message and the abilities of the individual with the disability (Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Settlement Letter Complaint #09-97-2002). When an entity selects software programs and/or hardware equipment not adaptable for people with disabilities, "...the subsequent substantial expense of providing access is not generally regarded as an undue burden when such cost could have been significantly reduced by considering the issue of accessibility at



the time of the initial selection” (OCR Settlement Letter Complaint #09-97-2002).

Only when Congress strengthened Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act in 1998 did the issue of accessible information technology become a focal point for educational institutions. Section 508 requires that when federal agencies procure, develop, use, maintain, or upgrade information technology they must ensure that it complies with Section 508 guidelines. Information technology can include copiers, fax machines, information kiosks, computers, software and operating systems web sites, and telecommunications products.

ADA and Section 504 govern the right to individual accommodation to achieve access. Section 508 requires covered entities to procure accessible information technology. Section 508 guidelines are designed to create an accessible information environment that is compatible with AT. Educational entities may utilize Section 508 guidelines as a yardstick to measure their compliance with Section 504 and the ADA.

Many of the accommodations relating to information technology are inexpensive and easy to accomplish. For example, developing accessible web sites can be accomplished by simply reprogramming the content with Section 508 web site guidelines. Automated phone systems can be made accessible by providing at the start of the automated message a one-touch keystroke for access to a receptionist. Ensuring that all televisions purchased are thirteen inches or larger as those televisions are required by federal law to contain closed caption capability.

When accessible features are built into a school’s information system it becomes more convenient and more available to everyone – including users with disabilities. For more information contact Edward L. Myers III Esq., policy and funding specialist, AzTAP at 602.776.4699.

Edward Myers is an attorney with 13 years in disability law. He currently works for the Arizona Technology Access Program of Northern Arizona University.



Student Learning + Educated Staff = Success

To meet the *No Child Left Behind* requirements, Rio Salado College is now offering an Associate in Transfer Partnership (ATP) Degree: K-12 Classroom Instructional Support for individuals interested in becoming teacher aides/paraprofessionals. This degree is in partnership with Charter Oak State College, and Charter Learning and more than fulfills all criteria established by No Child Left Behind. It also provides a solid framework for further coursework to earn a bachelor’s degree.

Through a special partnership arranged by Rio Salado College, all 74 credits in the ATP plus an additional 22 in K-8 teacher education will fully transfer and apply toward a baccalaureate degree with Charter Oak State College in Connecticut, which is regionally accredited by the North Central Association and the Higher Learning Commission. Like the ATP degree, this Bachelor of Science Degree in Individualized Studies, with a focus on Education and Leadership, is also available through e-learning. Charter Oak State College offers the degree, Charter Learning the upper division course work, and Rio Salado College, the state approved elementary teacher education program.

More information on the new associate and baccalaureate degree partnership or teacher education programs in general is available by calling one of the college’s academic advisors at 480.517.8580 or by visiting http://www.riosalado.edu/teacher_prep.

In addition, the Charter Learning Post Baccalaureate Bridge Program enables students to apply credits that do not generally transfer towards traditional bachelor’s degree educational programs and teacher certification programs. Please contact them for further information if you feel your colleagues can be enabled by this program.

New SPED Validation Rules Implemented in SAIS for FY 2004

by Helen Hugo, ADE/MIS Quality Assurance Coordinator

A student may only receive services for *one* of the SPED needs groups listed below in order to pass integrity.

- Autism (A) – Emotionally Disturbed (ED) – Emotionally Disturbed Program (EDP)
- Multiple Disabilities (MD) – Multiple Disabilities Severe Sensory Impairment (MDSSI)
- Mild Mental Retardation (MIMR) – Moderate Mental Retardation (MOMR) – Severe Mental Retardation (SMR)

Stay on top of the SAIS-SPED submissions:

- Enter details in the Student Management System (SMS) as soon as a student is placed in a SPED program.
- Upload data immediately
- Check the SDSPED71 report. It should display all students that have SPED needs, and the programs/ services in which they are enrolled, whether or not they have passed integrity.

- If a student is missing, check SAIS submission results to make sure no transactional errors occurred.
- Check the Integrity Indicator on the report. If any student shows a failed status, check the Student Integrity Status report to determine the reason, and then correct the error.

By taking these steps, when December 1st arrives all data will be correctly captured in SAIS and counts will be accurate!

Needs Online

Needs Online has been removed for all users. If you need access for FY 2004, please contact the School Finance Department at 602.542.5695.

Questions?

If you have any questions on SAIS, contact your local Regional Training Center at <http://www.ade.az.gov/rtc/> or the ADE Support Center 1.866.577.9636 or 602.542.7378.

Special Education Emergency Supplemental Funding



There are federal funds available to public education agencies for emergency special education needs. These funds are limited in both amount and scope. Monies are granted upon demonstration that the education agency is in fiscal difficulty due to situations involving students who are eligible for special education services, but whose enrollment or needs could not have been anticipated during the normal budget planning process. The most common situation is the unexpected enrollment of a child with significant disabilities that requires support over and above services generally provided by the education agency. Rapid growth in special education preschool programs can also qualify. Other circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Please contact Kristen Dewey at kdewey@ade.az.gov for a complete packet of information and an application, or you may call her at 602.542.5447. An online application will be available soon.

Teachers: Make Partnering Easy for Parents

There is no doubt that parental involvement in the IEP process is one key to student success. Yet it can be a difficult relationship to forge. Elizabeth Shaw serves as a court appointed guardian for students with disabilities in the foster care system. As such, her sole responsibility is to ensure the delivery of services that will serve as the educational foundation for future success.

Functioning as a surrogate parent has given Ms. Shaw a view from the “other side of the table” and has strengthened her role as a special education teacher at PPEP TEC Charter High School in Tucson. In her role as “parent,” she has met wonderful professionals who treat her with respect and have the student’s best interests at heart. Below is a list of steps teachers can take to encourage a successful relationship with parents.

1. Start meetings on time and have an agenda
2. Introduce others
3. Eliminate extraneous paperwork at the meeting – looking at a stack of documents can be daunting for a parent!
4. Don’t read the IEP to the parent at the meeting
5. Don’t assume a lack of knowledge on the part of the parent
6. Talk to the parent ahead of time – understand the person you are communicating with
7. Understand parents’ goals for the child before the meeting begins

8. Don’t be too quick to say that something can’t be done – investigate first
9. Keep your promises
10. Understand what you can and can’t do and communicate that to the parent
11. Be honest with the parent
12. Avoid group-think behavior – if the parent notes a problem or suspects a problem and neither the special educator nor the teacher has seen the problem in question, don’t assume there isn’t a problem – take the time to dig for more information and understand the dynamics
13. Stick to time limits
14. Avoid sidebar conversations that the parent can’t participate in or understand
15. Put parents in a “power” role – ask questions that allow them to share their insights into their children

Submitted by Elizabeth M. Shaw, Ed.D, Special Educator, PPEP TEC Charter High School, 1840 E. Benson Highway, Tucson, AZ 85710

Editor’s note:

Please let us know in one or two paragraphs how your school carves out time for professional development. Send submissions to plevesq@ade.az.gov.



is to calculate the amount of materials needed to complete the project.

Science includes biodiversity and population densities of plants and animals, adaptation, properties of matter, the elements, the earth-moon system, and genetics. They study erosion and practical requirements for roads and pathways as well as the environmental effects.

Art and music are also incorporated into the theme. Students design tribal flags, study totem poles and their meanings, and examine the use of colors in native dress, etc. for several different cultures. They work with drums, chants, and the making of musical instruments with natural materials, as well as study the profound impacts the arts have on cultural development.

The team planned a lot of curriculum integration and crossover into the project. For example, students develop a business plan and “run” a mining operation for copper. From a scientific perspective, they must take into consideration supply and demand, and the appropriate use of natural resources. They look at the effects of growth and development on the environment and on cultural values. Math is used to evaluate profit and loss of the business.

As in the television show, the tribes compete against each

other at challenges, in the form of tribal tasks devised by either the teachers or the students. Each challenge differs in both content and structure. One example might be presenting a problem from each subject with tribes rotating through the stations, working as teams to find a solution. Another might consist of a project that tribal teams must complete within a given time period. Other challenges include spelling bees, “jeopardy” games and much, much more.

Every student participates, both individually and teaming up with their tribe, in these tasks that require critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The winning tribe carries off the coveted *tiki* trophy to their homeroom until the next quarterly challenge. Individual student assessments take place throughout the year and vary according to instructor, subject, and project objectives.

The “Survivor” program at DSMS has already produced many positive changes for everyone involved. The teachers are more diversified in their teaching strategies and have become better facilitators. The user-friendly and non-hostile environment safely



encourages students to take risks, thereby increasing learning capacity. Students learn cooperation, teamwork, and mutual acceptance. Administrators who observe the classrooms find them filled with active students who encourage and help one another, a sure sign of improved self-esteem. Attendance is up and overall grade point averages are on the rise. Many students move into leadership roles, assuming responsibility not only for their own learning, but for their tribe as well.

Perhaps most gratifying of all for the teachers is to see students transfer their knowledge through the use of vocabulary and communication of concepts that overlap subjects. "We see a genuine interest in learning as students discuss their experiences and plan resources for future challenges," said Dowdle.

This project is a living entity, growing and adapting with each group of students and their individual personalities. The teacher-team constantly evaluates the process, revising content and challenges, to offer their students the best educational experience it is within their power to provide.

For more information on the "Survivor" program, contact David Dowdle at 623.691.1877 or ddowdle@sand.cartwright.k12.az.us.



Did you know the last three issues of the *Special Edition* can be downloaded from the web? www.ade.az.gov/ess. Click on Comprehensive Systems of Personnel Development.

Strategies for Teaching Diverse Learners

These are a few of the methods Coyote Team uses to teach LD students and English language learners.

- Teach to the dominant learning style of the LD learner
- Use manipulatives
- Allow more time to complete assignments and take tests
- Tape record directions
- Make models
- Conduct a play
- Write a song
- Plan activities that involve a total physical response
- Play music to create a mood
- Use rhythmic chants to aid memorization
- Role play with supporting roles
- Make connections to real-life personal experiences
- Allow students to use the computer instead of writing assignments out by hand



Winner of 2002's Golden Bell Award
The Coyote Team!
From Desert Sands Middle School
Congratulations on this prestigious award

Arizona Works Toward Alignment

In a system that thrives on catch phrases and trends, the latest in the mix is “alignment” instead of collaboration or integration. Traditionally, educators have been asked to collaborate with members of IEP teams, other agencies, and people who provide services that help students with disabilities attain their post-school outcomes. However, as Bob Haugh from the Department of Education in New Jersey said, collaboration is “an unnatural act - performed by two non-consenting adults.”

It is important to move past the perceptions associated with such terms as “collaboration” and “integration.” Collaboration depends on the good will of others. Integration denotes loss of separate identity. In an effort to avoid the loss of autonomy, which denigrates those who are passionate and devoted to a cause, the Department of Education has embraced the concept of alignment. The goal is to work together to align program visions, policies, and processes, creating an environment for change that can lead to growth.

The State of Arizona formed a leadership team to focus on improving results for students with disabilities. Before issues could be raised and solutions brainstormed, members of the team had to become aligned. The team, consisting of students, parents, special educators, vocational educators, vocational rehabilitation counselors, postsecondary disability resource coordinators, and Title I specialists, first defined effective transition planning. This became the foundation upon which all other work would rest.

The Arizona team went to Washington, DC, to participate in a national summit. Over 40 states and territories across the nation were represented. The summit modeled alignment. Imagine a multitude of federal programs¹, uniting under a common cause: to bring state teams together to develop strategic action



plans which will lead to improved post-school outcomes. Certainly if this host of federal agencies can do it, the State of Arizona can follow in step.



At the summit, Arizona was recognized as progressive and futuristic. The Arizona team was the only one out of the 40-plus represented, to include students with disabilities and thoroughly assess partners’ needs. Matt Hoie and Carrie Raabe not only participated on the state team, but also served on a youth panel with less than 36-hours notice. They responded to questions from a moderator and several of the more than 350 audience attendees. They spoke of the need for youth to be self-determined, to have experiences and knowledge of one’s own disability, and to have work experiences and vocational opportunities.

Utilizing the knowledge of the students and expertise of the content experts, the Arizona team developed a strategic action plan which has significant scope and potential for improving outcomes. Over the next eighteen months, the core team who attended the summit will work on four main goals:

- Compose and send letters of support to develop and implement the Arizona Transition Leadership Team with key state and local agency representation
- Identify and recruit members for the Arizona Transition Leadership Team
- Obtain the support from the Governor to develop and implement the Arizona Transition Leadership Team to work toward systemic improvement in Arizona’s transition planning system

- Representatives for the state Education Advisory Panel, the state Rehabilitation Council, the state Independent Living Council, and the Interagency Transition Team along with young adults, parents and family members, and summit representatives will meet with the Governor's office to propose the development of the Arizona Transition Leadership Team and receive support and authorization to move forward with the proposal.

In Arizona, energetic and progressive groups have been formed and promising practices have been implemented at the local, regional and state levels. Yet they work in isolation of each other. The Arizona Transition Leadership Team will solidify a process and forum for building consensus on a vision, common goals, and core principles for families, educators, agencies, advocates and others to rally around. All constituencies can use this framework internally, to align their programs and policies as well as form a basis for common action between groups and agencies.

A lot of work remains to bring Arizona's "movers and shakers" into alignment on the issues surrounding the needs of Arizona's young adults. However, having the

plan developed, and the process outlined, is a powerful starting point.

For information on the Arizona Transition Leadership Team or information presented at the Summit, please contact Wendy Collison at 602.364.4026 or via email at wcollis@ade.az.gov.

¹ including Rehabilitation Services Administration, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Office of Disability Employment Policy, Social Security Administration, National Collaboration on Workforce and Disability, National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, U.S. Office of Special Education Programs, National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, Employment and Training Administration, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, National Association of Workforce Boards, Office of Disability, and the President's Committee for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

Youth with Disabilities Transition Program Design Features

[for research-based Effective Practices]

- 1 Preparatory Experiences** of career assessments, employment opportunity awareness, and work readiness skill development
- 2 Connecting Activities** of academic tutoring, post-secondary education and additional learning opportunity exploration; supportive peer and adult mentors; assistive technology, transportation, benefits planning, health maintenance, and other self-sufficiency exploration necessary to make informed choices
- 3 Work-Based Experiences** of job site visits and tours, job shadowing, and paid and unpaid internships
- 4 Leadership Development Experiences** of supportive role models, personal leadership development, and personal leadership opportunities

For more information, go to <http://www.ncwd-youth.info>. Click on the link for the High School/High Tech Program Manual.

GRANTS

Capacity Building Grants, New and Improved!

Have you seen the new capacity building grants? In response to your input, lots of changes have been made to the online application and the reporting of programmatic successes. We've changed the criteria. We've changed some of the names. We've even added a new grant or two.

The Professional Development Leadership Academy, in cooperation with the Arizona Department of Education, kicked off a new grant initiative that supports the creation of a statewide system of professional development. The heart of the Professional Development Plan Grant is to develop a sustainable personnel development program that builds the capacity of an education agency to realize increased student achievement through improved educator knowledge and skills. These same elements have been applied to the other capacity building grant criteria in an abridged format that focuses on assessing a school's need and providing a plan to address that need.

The new Reading Intervention Grant is aligned with the federally awarded State Improvement Grant, Goal 3. (All SIG goals can be viewed at <http://www.azsig.com/sig.htm>.) The intent of this grant is to improve reading skills for students with disabilities, grades 4–8, in low performing schools. Through a systemic change approach, the focus is to increase teachers' knowledge and ability to teach effective reading strategies in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension to students with disabilities.

Those who have capacity building grants currently in operation have seen the new completion report format for reporting programmatic successes. The new design was developed to draw out exciting and innovative approaches to solving problems addressed by capacity building grants. This design will form the

foundation of best practices that will be reported through a web site, which is currently being developed and tested by Northern Arizona University, Institute for Human Development. The web site should be fully online by March 2004 and will contribute to the PDLA/ADE statewide system of professional development by providing a reporting mechanism for effective practices.

The online applications for the FY2004–2005 cycle, project start date July 1, 2004, will be made available to education agencies starting Fall 2003. The applications will go online on the Grants Management Enterprise (GME) on a staggered schedule. Districts, charter schools, and other education agencies that want to apply for these competitive funds should periodically check the GME's home page to find these funding opportunities. Grant applications will be online for at least six weeks. It is a good idea to consult each grant's corresponding application download to refer to submission deadlines, eligibility requirements, and other important information.

Gratitude is extended to all education agencies that have administered programs subsidized by capacity building funds. Your participation and input into the process have aided in the evolution of a capacity building grant program that is more focused with greater accountability and, hopefully, a lot more user friendly. Your continued participation will surely contribute toward better services for all students, and most particularly for students with disabilities.

If you have questions about capacity building grants, feel free to contact the program coordinator, Celia Kujawski, telephone 602.432.3213, e-mail ckujaws@ade.az.gov.

Online Resources

Math Web Sites

This Internet site contains significant collections of materials that can be used in the teaching of mathematics at the K-12 level. <http://archives.math.utk.edu/k12.html>

Trackstar: Different math strategies to assist the teacher in lesson plans, information for parents, professional, and other helpful links to aid in methods to aid students with learning disabilities. http://trackstar.scrtec.org/main/display.php3?track_id=104383

Resource Lists: Learning Strategies for Students with Learning Disabilities: Teaching math to students with learning disabilities is included. www.nichcy.org/pubs/bibliog/bib14txt.htm

Learning: Educators know the challenge of finding enjoyable and engaging math activities for students. Check out this web site full of practical math applications, games, lesson plans, and learning challenges. <http://www.learning.caliberinc.com/math.html>

ENC: The Eisenhower National Clearinghouse devoted a recent issue of their journal FOCUS, to "Mathematics and Science for Students with Special Needs." See this excellent journal online at <http://www.enc.org/features/focus/>. Look under "More ENC topics."

Learning Disabilities OnLine: LD In-Depth: Using Cooperative Learning to Teach Math to LD Students www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/math_skills/coopmath.html

Teaching How-tos: Math Teaching LD - Information and Resources for Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities www.dldcec.org/teaching_how-tos/math

Strategies for Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities www.as.wvu.edu/~acad/mllearn.html

Math Disabilities Help with Math Answers and Tips for Teachers & Parents. Help with Accommodating Math Students with Learning Disabilities, Teaching Strategies and Modifications. www.parentpatch.com/math_disabilities_help_with_math.htm

LD: Math Resources by Disorder Learning Disabilities: Math provides practice in algebra word problems; Burrier, H. (1988); How to Study Math. NJ: Prentice Hall, Inc.; Hall. Strategies

for Learning Math; RCLD handout. Teaching math to students with learning disabilities: www.gsu.edu/~wworld/Resources/math.htm

PBS Teacher Source: Discover innovative professional development in math and technology. <http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/math.htm>

LD in Depth: Learning disabilities in the area of mathematics are explored here. Often referred to as dyscalculia, math-related learning disabilities are complex and require intervention by skillful teachers to help students achieve success. We've gathered informative articles and direction to the latest teaching research to provide understanding and assistance to both parents and educators. http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/math_skills/

ASCD: A professional development web site with short multimedia lessons on a variety of topics including math. Beginning School Mathematics (BSM) is a K-2 professional development initiative for mathematics reform. BSM features teaching and learning concepts, strategies, and materials in a comprehensive staff development and support program. <http://www.ascd.org>

National web sites

President George Bush has centered his educational reform policies around the No Child Left Behind Act. Find out how this impacts your school and community by learning more on their web site: <http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov/>

Arizona web sites of importance

Find out what the people at the Arizona Educational Foundation are all about and the role they play in helping K-12 schools across the Grand Canyon State: <http://www.azedfoundation.org/>

The Arizona K-12 Center is designed around curriculum issues and staff development for schools. Check out their web site to find out how this center is working to improve the lives of students across the Grand Canyon State: <http://azk12.nau.edu/>

The Journal of American Indian Education at Arizona State University offers important research into Native American learning. Check out their web site at: <http://jaie.asu.edu/>

Preparing Elementary Education Preservice Teachers to Use Assistive Technology: A University-Community Partnership

The College of Education faculty at ASU and Southwest Human Development have partnered for the past two years to develop and present two-hour workshops on assistive technology for general education preservice teachers. The first hour of the workshop introduces a model of assistive technology provision developed by Joy Zabala - Student, Environment, Task, Tools Approach. Participants get to play with trunk-loads of assistive devices ranging from low to high-level technology. The second hour consists of a panel discussion with individuals who use assistive technology in their daily lives. These workshops were specifically designed to complement the elementary education partnership program curriculum but all general education preservice teachers will find them useful. Each workshop attendee will receive a certificate from Southwest documenting his or her participation in the assistive technology workshop.

The COE has surveyed participant satisfaction with the workshops each semester and used their comments to refine the presentation. Responses to the Spring 03 survey ranged from 4.4-4.9 on a 5-point Likert Scale with 5 being the highest rating. Their written comments also indicated a high level of satisfaction with the experience.

"Excellent information. I learned a lot about the tools that can be used, as well as barriers that people with disabilities face."

"Having the actual assistive technologies in class to use was very helpful to understand how it works."

"This was awesome!"

"The panel - I loved hearing about how they personally use assistive technology."

"I learned so much today. I'm so glad you had people come with disabilities that use AT."

From the fall of 2001 through the spring of 2003 approximately 300 elementary education preservice teachers participated in the AT workshops. As these general education preservice teachers graduate and begin teaching in Arizona schools they will be working with special educators. Their familiarity with assistive technology and agencies like Southwest Human Development will contribute to ensuring that all children in Arizona have highly qualified teachers able to collaborate with other educators and community resource personnel in order to support their individual educational, personal, and social needs.

For more information contact Kathleen Rutowski at Kathleen.Rutowski@asu.edu.

Professional Development Opportunity

An exciting new opportunity exists for teachers to participate in K-3 professional development in scientifically based reading research methodologies at no cost to the school or your teachers!

Time is short to take advantage of this program, and available space is limited, so administrators are urged to contact one or more of the contracted professional development providers listed below as soon as possible.

Schools must register for the program no later than January 31, 2004.

Voyager: Vernon Johnson, 214.932.3215

Scholastic: Jennifer Haydock, or Dan Dunham, 800.387.1437

Co-nect: Jessica Swieca, 877.726.6328 ext. 1

Feel free to contact Christy Farley at 602.542.5057 or Marie Mancuso at 602.364.2333 for more information.

E-School Grants

Grant Title: Mathematica Academic Grant Program

Organization: Wolfram Research Inc.

Eligibility: Schools

Value: Software

Wolfram Research Inc., the maker of a technical computing software system called Mathematica, is donating Mathematica Classroom Pack licenses to applicants who show outstanding creative promise in using Mathematica to enhance their education and research activities. Recipients also should demonstrate a commitment to expanding the use of Mathematica within their school and should be able to act as a reference for other schools.

Contact: , (217) 398-0700, ext. 703 ,

Mathematicagrants@wolfram.com

<http://www.wolfram.com/company/programs/academic>

Grant Title: Model School Program

Organization: Intel Corp.

Eligibility: Schools

Value: Grants

Intel Corp.'s Model School Program gives every school in the United States the chance to apply for potential seeding of equipment. To apply, schools must submit an innovative proposal for using technology to enhance instruction, and if Intel likes what it sees, it will match grant recipients with companies that can provide the equipment necessary to meet their needs.

Contact: <http://www.intel.com/modelschool...>

Grant Title: RGK Foundation Grants

Organization: The RGK Foundation

Eligibility: Schools and districts

Value: Varies

The RGK Foundation awards grants in the broad areas of education, community, and medicine or health. The foundation's primary interests within education include programs that focus on formal K-12 education (particularly mathematics, science, and reading or literacy), after-school tutoring and enrichment, integrating technology into the curriculum, teacher development, and higher education. The foundation is particularly interested in programs that attract female and minority students into the fields of mathematics, science, and technology. Applicants are required to submit an electronic Letter of Inquiry on the foundation's web site. Letters of Inquiry are reviewed on an ongoing basis, so there is no deadline for submission. The foundation will respond to letters by e-mail within three weeks to let applicants know if they should submit a formal proposal.

Contact: Jami Hampton, (512) 474-9298,

jhampton@rgkfdn.org

<http://www.rgkfoundation.org/guidelines.php...>

Thank You
THANK YOU

ESS extends a sincere "thank you" to the 520 plus participants and presenters involved in *Moving Forward: Finding New Roads to Success*. Without your energy, enthusiasm, and dedication to improving results for youth with disabilities, the conference would not have been a success. Evaluations provided an incredible amount of feedback that the conference planning committee will take into careful consideration for next year's conference.

The ESS staff looks forward to seeing you at the 2004 transition conference, which is on the calendar for September 22 & 23 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Wigwam Resort and Golf Club in Phoenix. For further information about *Moving Forward: Finding New Roads to Success* or about next year's event, contact Wendy Collison at 602.364.4026 or wcollis@ade.az.gov.



Did you know?

Aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mttair in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a total mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

amzanig huh?

Things You Should Know

AZ Learns Revisions

In September the Arizona State Board of Education unanimously approved changes advocated by Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne to the Arizona Learns school accountability system.

Under the new AZ Learns model schools will be labeled one of five ways:

Excelling: A school that demonstrates optimal student performance

Highly Performing: A school that exceeds the state's expectations with regard to student proficiency in reaching the state's academic standards, and has a predetermined number of students exceeding the standard

Performing: A school that meets the state's expectations with regard to student proficiency in reaching the state's academic standards

Underperforming: A school in need of improvement in its academic performance

Failing to Meet Academic Standards: A school receiving three consecutive underperforming classifications that have been confirmed by site review

Out of Level Testing

The issue of out of level instructional level assessment is a hot topic for today's students. Superintendent Horne is working to obtain permission from the U.S. Department of Education to use alternate assessments where appropriate. In the meantime, he is bound to uphold current federal mandates.

Students with significant cognitive deficits may be tested using the AIMS-A (per the IEP team decision and current NCLB direction). Because AIMS scores are used to report annual yearly performance (AYP), for all other students this testing must be administered at enrolled grade level.

However, districts may still do out of level assessment when administering district assessment plans, the Stanford-9, or the ASAT alternative.

For more information contact Joanne Phillips at 602.542.5446.

ADE has now completed vertically articulated standards for math and language arts. Science should be approved this spring. You can download them at www.ade.az.gov. Click on "Accountability and Standards" then click on "K-12 Academic Standards."

Children, Schools Need to be Counted

The Arizona Department of Education contracts with the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC) to provide statewide media service to all students in the state who are blind or visually impaired. This includes the Federal Quota Registration Program. Funds provided through this program are used to purchase adapted educational materials from the American Printing House for the Blind.

In January 2004, the Arizona Instructional resource Center (AIRC), an arm of the FBC, will solicit registrations statewide. All teachers of the visually impaired, special education directors/coordinators of all school districts, ASDB regional COOPs, charter schools, as well as agencies with students who are legally blind, are asked to respond. The AIRC processes the registrations and creates the annual roster for the FQ funds. For more information, go to www.apb.org.

Federal Quota Funds Distribution in Arizona

Fund allocation is based on this annual registration. In the Annual Federal Budget Agreement, Congress determines the per capita amount for distribution.

As opposed to most other states, the AIRC pools the dollars to purchase adapted materials from APH as needed by all students with a visual impairment in Arizona's school districts, not just those who are legally blind. However, the funds are not intended for materials used by teachers or other staff.

Students have no annual material use limit and may access this fund until it is depleted. The AIRC loans out these adapted educational materials at no charge. As the AIRC operates on a loan basis, borrowers must return all materials, including equipment available on FQ funds, at the end of the school year, unless a renewal request is submitted. Recycling allows the organization to make more effective use of the materials.

Teachers or special education directors who are not sure which students might qualify, or what adapted materials and books are available, should contact Inge Durre at the Arizona Instructional Resource Center, Foundation for Blind Children, 1235 E. Harmont Drive, Phoenix, AZ 85020, 602.678.5816, idurre@the-fbc.org.

Outreach

Upcoming 2004 Monthly Outreach Trainings



Regional Outreach Training will be offered through May for Arizona administrators and educators. A new and exciting topic will be offered each month at nine sites throughout the state. These trainings will offer the latest information with a focus on increasing understanding and compliance of federal and state laws, and resources available from ESS. These trainings offer opportunities to network and receive information designed to facilitate and improve appropriate services for students with disabilities. Later training times will be offered on topics especially geared for teachers. This information was provided in a mailing to all districts and charters in the state in late July. This information is posted at www.ade.az.us/ess and on both the ESS Training Calendar at www.ade.az.gov/ess/trainingcalendar and the ADE Training and Event Calendar at www.ade.az.gov/onlineregistration/calendar.

NASDSE's Satellite Training Program has expanded!

This year the NASDSE teleconferences and the Reading Rocket teleconferences have combined.

Wednesday, February 18, 2004

12:00-1:30 pm (ET)

Reading Rockets "Making Parents Partners" with Dr. Karen Mapp, Susan Hall, and Tom Bowman

Wednesday, March 10, 2004 1:30-3:00 pm (ET)

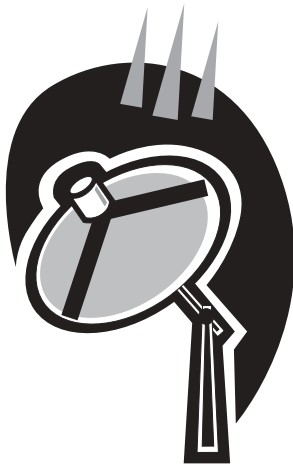
NASDSE teleconference: Members of the Pennsylvania IDEA Interagency Team will share their success in collaboration and joint responsibility for the successful transition of Pennsylvania students with disabilities into adult community living.

Wednesday, March 17, 2004 12:00-1:30 pm (ET)

Reading Rockets "Teaching English Language Learners to Read" with Diane August, Dr. Margarita Calderon, and Dr. Fred Genesee

Wednesday, May 5, 2004

NASDSE teleconference: Presenters will share research as well as suggested practices and successful experiences that address the opportunity education and mental health agencies have in working with parents to make collaboration a reality.



Hosts needed!!

ESS purchases the coordinates for the downlinks of NASDE's Satellite Training Program and makes them available to those schools that wish to offer the program to their communities. Written materials are provided prior to each session and a video tape from the downlink is supplied afterward. Great training materials for the year.

If you would be willing to provide a host location for these satellite trainings, or to obtain the satellite coordinates, please contact Cande Barfuss at mbarfus@ade.az.gov or 602.542.3184.



CEC Online

The Council for Exceptional Children is offering a variety of online workshops on critical and timely special education topics. Go to their web site www.cec.sped.org and click on *Professional Development Training & Events*.

Arizona Department of Education
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